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The editor regrets that for various reasons it is not always possible to acknowledge every item of correspondence received by Contact (UK) personnel, a fact in no way diminishing our gratitude to all those who bother to communicate with us.

E D I T O R I A L

Members will recall a few issues back that, for reasons of business commitments, your editor had to relinquish his post, and that an editorial committee headed by the National Chairman, brought out the last few issues of this magazine. And most successfully too, judging from the standards they achieved. Now, however, your editor is able to return to the fray (although for how long remains uncertain) and presents this, the Christmas issue for 1977. Hopefully it contains items of interest to all of you and much food for thought.

Looking back on the 1977 ufological scene it seems that the most important aspects of it have involved the setting up of official ufo study units in France and the United States, the latter, so we are led to believe, being organized quite differently from the ill-fated Condon Committee of the 1960's. Also, as these lines are written, the United Nations is considering serious international study of the ufo problem, which, as we all know, just will not go away. Obviously sufficient "evidence" for the reality of the problem has accumulated in official circles to merit these new moves. Your committee feels sure that all of you will applaud the decisions so far taken to establish these new units and that you will join them in hoping that a similar unit will be set-up soon in Britain and its findings made known publically in due course. Indeed, our Founder President, the Earl of Clancarty, is shortly to raise the question of such a British unit being formed in the House of Lords sessions.

Naturally, while one fully supports these sensible moves in France and the USA, one still remembers the Condon Committee debacle, and what an incredibly inept "whitewash" job it attempted, and fervently hopes that these new units will study the problem in depth and as comprehensively as possible. The popular notion is that ufos (if they exist, as indeed they really seem to) represent extraterrestrial craft from other planets, whereas accumulating evidence suggests that some if not all ufos may originate from other dimensions or space-time continua, an interpretation that, initially at least, may find less acceptance among men in general than the space-craft concept. As unbiased ufologists we neither accept nor reject such hypotheses. But is the public unbiased, or, put another way, would they accept an official communique to the effect that ufos, after all, come from another space-time continuum? This would surely be a bigger pill to swallow than the already sobering one that ufos are real spacecraft from other planets. Due to this, might not the new ufo study centres hesitate to announce such a revelation if their investigations prove the space-time continuum concept to be the answer? Even if the public readily accepted such an explanation, how would science, currently entrenched in many well-proven dogmas, react to what would virtually be an undermining of many of its apparently cherished beliefs. This is not to say that current scientific thinking is wrong, but merely to emphasize that, as yet, it seems to have studied only a part of the vast cosmos of which we are a part in purely physical terms observable or detectable by us. Those parts that are invisible or hard to detect it has paid scant attention to, and has few viable answers or explanations for them.

Thus, while expressing delight at the formation of these new study centres, we also counsel caution in expecting too much from them. If they can officially see their respective ways to announcing the reality of ufos, that at least will be a step in the right direction. Until then we can only wait and see.

The Editor.

"THE 1897 AIRSHIP: SOME NEW PERSPECTIVES"

by

Brian Burden, M.A. (Oxon.)*

In the late 1960's I was attempting to put together a book on the scientific fiction of H.G.Wells. That book has still to see the light of day. A voracious reader of UFO literature, I had noted the proliferation of "Airship" reports in April 1897, and wondered whether they might have helped Wells's "WAR OF THE WORLDS", or, conversely, whether Wells might have, through the publication of that celebrated story, provoked a rash of hoaxes when Pearson's Magazine began to serialize his novel in April 1897. It turned out that I was wrong on both counts; the coincidence in time between publication of Wells's novel and the Airship "flap" was too close for either to have influenced the other. In any case, Pearson's Magazine was not publishing stateside at that time.

Meanwhile, however, inspired by the Dallas Morning News account of the alleged airship crash at Aurora, Texas (now, ironically, acknowledged to be a hoax), I had written to Dallas Public Library and secured the generous co-operation of Mrs Lucile Boykin, head of the Texas History and Genealogy Department, in tracking down airship stories and sending me photostats of relevant material. Airship stories appeared regularly from April 17, 1897, to April 21 inclusive. After the latter date they cease abruptly.

Straining to read the tiny print of the photostats, I was surprised at how few of the stories had found their way into modern UFO literature, especially as some of them had a distinctly modern flavour. One report, for example, headed "Colonel Peoples Sees It", described how a "huge whale-back" had approached the Colonel's farm making a humming sound, and hovered over his "artificial lake", sending down "streamers" (rays of light?). Another report (Dallas Morning News, April 19, 1897) datelined "Hillsboro....April 16", concerned a lawyer who had subsequently sworn an affidavit regarding his experience. This follows a, by now, classic formula.

The lawyer, J.Spence Bounds, had been visiting a local farmer to help him make his will. Returning late at night across the desolate open countryside,

"I was astonished by a brilliant searchlight which passed directly over my buggy. I...was almost frightened to death by it for it made the space around me as light as day. My horse was also frightened and came near overturning the buggy. Snorting, he reared and plunged madly, trembling meantime like a leaf. My hair stood straight up... Fortunately the light rested on us scarcely a second, but glided along over the fields and the country till it was suddenly turned upward toward the heavens".

Bounds looked up and beheld, "about a thousand feet above me...a huge black monster...in shape something like a cigar..." As he continued to watch,

"The searchlight was presently shut off and a number of incandescent lights flashed around the lower edge of the body of the vessel or whatever it was".

Soon, all the lights were extinguished and "it glided along like a small black cloud in the air", eventually coming to rest on a hill where it disappeared from sight.

By far the most interesting of these reports, however, concerns the alleged experience of one C.L.McUhany (or McIlhany — the print is difficult to decipher). This story, datelined "Stephenville...April 17", appeared in the Dallas Morning

*

300, Church Street, Bocking, Braintree, Essex.

This is one of those numerous reports in which the remarkably inefficient airship is located on the ground undergoing repairs. McUhany, described as a "prominent farmer", reported his discovery to the Dallas Morning News office at Stephenville, and the reporters treated it with that brand of facetiousness with which we have become familiar in more modern ufo cases. Indeed, one of my less helpful contacts in the area declined to follow up local leads on the grounds that "obviously" the reporters thought this man "was a nut". I shall assume, however, that Mr McUhany was sane and truthful.

McUhany came upon the airship grounded early in the morning, and quickly assembled a crowd of no less than 23 prominent citizens (all named in the newspaper report --- if only somebody had checked out these individuals thirty years ago). The airship was described as being 60 feet long, cigar shaped, and had "two immense aeroplanes" (wings). At each end were giant airscrews resembling "metallic windmills". According to the crew, motive power was provided by an electric engine supplied by storage batteries. The most interesting part of McUhany's story, however, concerns the occupants:

"The crew consisted...of two men, who gave their names as S.E.Tilman (sic.) and A.E.Dolbear. They report that they have been making an experimental trip to comply with certain capitalists of New York, who are backing them. They are confident that they have achieved a great success and that in a short time the navigation of the air will be an assured fact. They refused to have their machine critically examined and refused to talk further as to their plans for the future."

Although they had stayed on the ground long enough for McUhany to collect an audience for them, the crew now "rapidly made the necessary repairs", whereupon "the ship rose gently into the air and sailed off in a southwesterly direction" (Bonds's airship had been pursuing a "southerly" course). McUhany left the Stephenville office with this parting shot: "What do you reckon is going to happen when dynamiters get to riding in airships and dropping bombs down on folks and cities?"

Mr McUhany seems to have been a most perceptive gentleman.

The name of S.E.Tilman meant nothing to me, but the name "Dolbear" rang a faint bell. Accordingly, I wrote to the Library of Congress to ask whether they had any publications on file by either individual, and if they could supply me with any further information about them.

Back came the reply: They had nothing on "Tilman" (if they had looked up "Tillman" their reply might have been very different), but A.E.Dolbear was a different matter. During the period in question, he had been Professor of Physics at Tufts University, Medford, Massachusetts.

Accordingly I wrote to Mr Russell Miller, the University Archivist at Tufts, and asked the following questions:

- 1) Had Dolbear sought leave of absence during April 1897?
- 2) Did Dolbear ever seek financial support from a group of New York businessmen?
- 3) Did Dolbear carry out researches into:-
 - a) Electrical propulsion.
 - b) Storage batteries.
 - c) Aviation?
- 4) Did Dolbear carry out any joint research with one S.E.Tilman?

Mr Miller's reply was dated March 10th., 1970. There was no evidence that Dolbear had sought leave of absence at the time mentioned. On other matters, however, the news was more hopeful. I quote:

"2. Although he had contact with a group of New York businessmen in (the) 1890's, there is no evidence that he made any agreement with them.

3. Dolbear did carry out research in the three areas you mention....(Here Mr Miller supplied me with a list of articles on file, including one entitled "WILL MAN EVER FLY?").

4. Samuel Escue Tillman. Dolbear apparently knew Tillman professionally, although there is no known direct correspondence between the two. Tillman (1847-1942) was an Army officer and Professor of Chemistry, Mineralogy and Geology at the United States Military Academy".

I wrote back requesting a copy of "WILL MAN EVER FLY?". This short article appeared in the Boston Sunday Globe for September 8th., 1894. Discussing the pioneer work of Langley, Crosby, Lilienthal and Chanute, Dolbear wrote:

"Seeing, then, that it is a mechanical possibility to fly, it is only a challenge to man's ingenuity to do so for his own convenience what is mechanically possible".

Later in the article, he pin-points the real obstacle to research --- cost:-

"If experiments of this kind were not so costly, it is probable that the thing would have been done before this. When disaster happens to a flying machine, the wreck is so great that an entirely new structure is needed for the next attempt, and those who are most interested in the work are seldom able to stand two or three smashups of the kind".

The solution?

"It is to be hoped that proper encouragement will be given to such as are trying to solve the problem and, instead of being laughed at for accidents and mistakes, they be provided with what is needed for testing every mechanical suggestion. After success has been reached in anything, the necessary things seem obvious enough to all. The discovery of the obvious is a slow and costly process".

If any readers are interested in pursuing all this further, several of Dolbear's books are available on the shelves of the British Museum Library. I shall return to Amos Dolbear in due course.

Meanwhile, I tried to follow up the Tillman segment. Somewhere along the line (I'm afraid I did not then keep an orderly file) I had obtained the address of S.E. Tillman's daughter, Mrs Tillman-Martin. As noted above, Tillman had been employed at West Point, which is in New York --- the source of the airship crew's alleged financial backers, and also, in at least one other "grounded airship" story, the starting-point for the flight. I had high hopes of sensational revelations. I was disappointed. No, Mrs Tillman-Martin had never heard of a Professor Dolbear in connexion with her father's activities, and she could not imagine why he should make a trip to Texas in the middle of a college term. Nonetheless, I wrote to West Point to enquire whether Tillman had sought leave of absence during April 1897. To coin an old Western saying, "I struck pay-dirt". In a letter dated October 8th., 1970, Stanley Tozeski, Chief of the Archives and History Branch, USMA Library, informed me that:

"On April 2, 1897, Professor Tillman forwarded a letter to the Adjutant, USMA, applying for two weeks' leave of absence during the period of April 20th. to May 1st. This letter was forwarded to the Adjutant General, US Army in Washington DC, along with a recommendation of approval".

Tillman gave as his forwarding address the Tillman family residence in Nashville, Tennessee.

No reason for Tillman's requested leave was on record at West Point, and Mr Tozeski suggested that the letter of request, now on file at the National Archives, might provide a clue. It didn't. It was brief and formal; and a snag — according to the official West Point records, Tillman began his leave on April 24th., one week after the Stephenville incident.

It is, of course, possible that Tillman was involved in an enterprise which had the blessing of the Army and was therefore regarded as official Army business. The holiday in Nashville would provide "cover" to explained the Professor's prolonged absence.

One final alley of investigation proved fruitless. In his list of witnesses, Mr McUhany included "Eugene Moore of the Stephenville Empire" and "Charles Bassell of the Stephenville Journal". Extensive correspondence on my part with various libraries and universities has established that no copies of either newspaper for this period apparently survive. It would be extremely interesting if any reader could produce, or knows of, a copy of either newspaper for the April 17-21, 1897, period. If so, they should communicate with me, or with the editor of this journal forthwith.

To sum up: A "prominent farmer" arrives at a newspaper office in a considerable state of excitement to describe an "airship" incident. He lists twenty-three witnesses, any one of whom could have demanded a retraction from the Dallas newspaper had the story been fallacious (in other cases, people did this). He names as pilots two scientists from the other side of America, and neither of whom he is likely to have previously heard of; one of them really does have a pioneer interest in electricity and aviation; the other does indeed travel south within days of the report. What is more, the experience attributed to Dolbear and Tillman is one which both men would undoubtedly have relished: in Dolbear's mimeographed biography produced in 1963 by his daughter-in-law, we read (p.207) that he "often yearned to fly". Tillman was an extremely adventurous man, who travelled to many parts of the world, including Antarctica, on assignments connected with scientific disciplines. For this information I am indebted to Ms Louise Davis of the Nashville Tennesean. She uncovered a manuscript autobiography of Tillman in the Tennessee State Library, and informs me that, like Dolbear, Tillman was interested in electricity and magnetism. She also informs me that, in a letter dated 19th January 1971, that he "skipped much of his autobiography from around 1890 to 1911", the very period embracing 1897 of such great interest to us here.

I find it hard to believe that all this is coincidence. If it is a hoax, then it is a very sophisticated one. Equally, I cannot swallow the idea that Dolbear and/or Tillman invented a highly advanced airship propelled by electricity, which they subsequently elected to forget about. Indeed, had Tillman's alleged part in all this had military backing, then the obvious military implications of a successfully flown airship would have scarcely been unappreciated by military brains, and some record of Army involvement would surely have come to light by now.

Equally, I cannot swallow the idea that Dolbear and/or Tillman, both with professed interest in aviation possibilities, would have deliberately destroyed or lost all the numerous notes and calculations they must have made had they constructed and flown such an airship as McUhany described. In the final analysis, I would opt for a John Keel - Trojan Horse thesis: Dolbear and Tillman were either used or impersonated. The question remains "If so, then by whom?".

"HIGH STRANGENESS ACTIVITY DURING THE U.K. WAVE OF 1977:UFOIN Progress Report no:2"

by

Jenny Randles.

In my previous article (1) I reviewed the early development of UFOIN out of the roots of the Northern UFO Network (NUFON), emphasizing its specialized nature as a team of experienced investigators working exclusively on high strangeness cases. An editorial in Flying Saucer Review (2) has given their viewpoint of the alliance.

UFOIN has made considerable progress during its first six months of operation, and it has been pleasing to see the high standards of investigative work which has been produced. Dossiers on the cases so investigated are kept at the Nottingham UFO Society's headquarters which is devoted exclusively to ufo investigation (3), and which also serves as UFOIN's headquarters. Plans are underway there to offer a service whereby case material in these files is, upon request, photocopied at cost; this service will not, however, be fully practicable in every instance as certain case reports are tens of pages long — such is the depth of investigation attained. The files, however, may be utilized by researchers at Nottingham — provided the proper prior arrangements are made with the officers of the Nottingham UFO Society. Full case reports will, of course, continue to be published in Flying Saucer Review, and regular summaries printed in "Awareness".

UFOIN has basically been created to try and overcome some of the difficulties that a group structure necessarily generates, and for that reason membership of UFOIN is currently restricted to about 30 individuals. Some of these are active members of other investigative groups, such as BUFORA, CONTACT(UK), MUFORA, etc. but combine their talents through UFOIN respecting significant cases located in their respective districts.

Probably the single most important development during UFOIN's formative stages has been the manner in which relationships with authorities and public bodies has expanded. In several instances, direct liaison with police has brought to light cases of great import, which would simply have never been discovered via other methods. One of these was a "physical traces" case at Hainault, in Essex (4). In time it is hoped that this liaison will grow still further and become productive of yet more otherwise undetectable episodes.

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The following cases are a selection of those investigated by UFOIN during the wave of ufo activity in the U.K. during the months of June, July, and August. They are presented in chronological order.

June 1st., 1977:

Barnard Castle, Co.Durham.

Investigated by Brian Straight

A motor-cyclist and a car driver were approached by a strange purple light that caused power to drain from both their machines. Both car and motor-cycle, however, were dragged over the brow of a hill by some unseen force. A wave of intense heat was felt by both witnesses, causing effects on their clothing, and which produced subsequent physiological effects. Exact time uncertain.

June 6th., 1977:

Waltham Abbey, Essex.

Investigated by Andy Collins.

On the same night as the previous case, just before midnight, a woman found her TV set suddenly disrupted by an unknown force. A greenish glow then flooded her

room and, on going outside, saw a large spherical object very close and at a low altitude in the sky.

June 25th., 1977.

Investigated by Barry King.

Wheathampstead, Hertfordshire.

Two photographic workers took four daylight snaps of a fuzzy domed disc as it flew over the road ahead of their car. The object was very large and shows well in the colour sequence these snaps represent. Analysis of the prints and negatives had led to the provisional conclusion that they are genuine.

August 3rd., 1977:

Investigated by Andy Collins & Barry King.

Thaxted, Essex.

The progress of a car was impeded by two purple lights at the side of a road along which it was being driven, and its speed was reduced to 35 m.p.h., exactly as if some kind of force was affecting it. Subsequent checks made on the mechanics of the car, and comparison of the reported effects with an identical set in another case, has led to the possibility that the magnetisation or polarity of the vehicle involved was completely reversed.

Some earlier cases investigated by UFOIN personnel are also of interest and merit permanent record here. Again, these are given chronologically, and relate to incidents going back as far as 1967.

June 1967.

Bovingdon, Hertfordshire.

Investigated by Jenny Randles.

A man walking along a lonely bridal path on a bright night around the 24th of the month, came upon a strange figure bending down by the side of the path. In height the figure was short and was wearing what looked like a black leather one-piece suit. He appeared to have a trowel-like instrument in his hand and was apparently digging in the earth. When approached by the witness, the figure made a high-pitched sound of strange type.

July 10th., 1975.

Ewloe, Clwyd.

Investigated by Ron. Sergeant.

In sunny weather early in the afternoon on this date, a couple driving their car confronted a very tall figure in a bright silvery suit having a balaclava-type face-mask. He seemed to have climbed down a nearby steep embankment, and was picking up something from the roadside as they drove past. This event occurred during the early hours of the afternoon, in broad daylight.

July 15th., 1976.

Newbridge, Eire.

Investigated by John Hind & Miles Johnston.

Two teenage boys took a series of flashlight photographs, in monochrome, of a spinning-top type of object which they asserted hovered over a field in broad daylight. It caused a battery tape-recorder they had with them to fail. Analysis of the photographs revealed they were of a handmade model thrown into the air, and the case must be recorded as a hoax or, at best, a photographic experiment.

Returning to 1977 we now have the results of two cases dating from the earlier months of the year and which, owing to their interest, deserve mention here.

January 5th., 1977.

Wrexham, Clwyd.

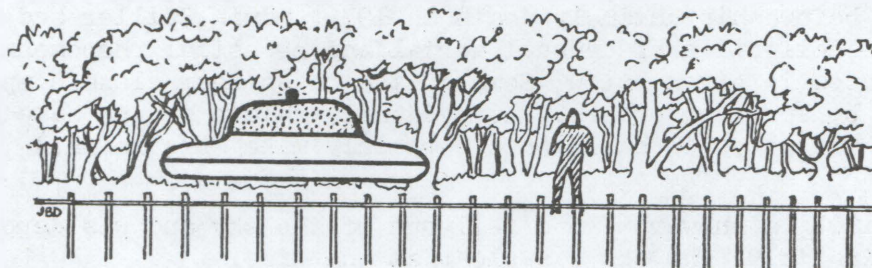
Investigated by Kenneth Green & Peter Warrington.

Two teenage boys snapped some early morning pictures of two fuzzy discs that they noticed passing over their back garden. Analysis by Kodak experts of the resultant colour prints failed to conclusively identify them as genuine, as inconsistencies in the method of taking them were discovered, and it is not impossible that the photographs were faked. This case will remain under review.

May 18th., 1977.

New Elgin, Morayshire.

Investigated by Jenny Randles & Bryan Hartley. Two young girls near a housing estate heard a strange humming sound, which was also heard by other witnesses. Investigating further, they saw a disc-shaped object with a red light on top hovering over a fence by some woods. Near it on the ground was a tall, thin-looking entity in a silvery suit with disproportionately short arms. The object subsequently took off in a stepped fashion, and disappeared. Ground traces were afterwards found in the woods close to where the object had hovered. Fig.1 shows the scene as described by the two girls.



UFO-like object and Entity seen by New Elgin woods
on May 18th., 1977.

All of the foregoing cases will be featured in depth in future issues of Flying Saucer Review, commencing with volume 23, no:3.

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UFO activity has generally been of an exceptionally high level so far this year. At this time of year NUFON usually has on file about 90 cases; this year (so far) it has exactly double that number, 180. Much of this recorded activity relates, of course, to low strangeness incidents. Nonetheless, the number of high strangeness cases has increased markedly over former years in proportion (indeed, probably more than in proportion to) with this rise. On the other hand, it may be that our knowledge of high strangeness events in former years was much less good than it now appears to be whereby the observable differences may not actually be all that large.

There was a small "flap" in Cumbria during July, which involved several multiple witness events of strange lights. Some of the witnesses were policemen. One incident involved a night observation by the police, and, on checking the site next day, a circle of flattened ground was discovered. This case is still under investigation.

So far, 1977 has certainly lived up to its expectations of being a flap year, and with just another couple of months to go (as this is being written) to the date predicted by Dr David Saunders for the onset of the next major ufo "wave" (5), we may wonder what lies in store for us. It is also of interest to note that, using different criteria, Bernard Delair has predicted that any time during the last three months of 1977 will probably witness a major wave somewhere or other in the world (6). It remains to be seen if Saunders and Delair are correct, and whether the predicted wave will affect Britain to any degree.

References:

- 1) Awareness, vol.6, no:3, Autumn 1977.
- 2) "UFOIN", Flying Saucer Review, vol.23, no:2, 1977.
- 3) UFOIN, c/o NUFOIS headquarters, 443 Meadow Lane, Nottingham NG2 3GB.
- 4) "Landing with traces observed by police", Flying Saucer Review, vol.23, no:2, 1977.

- 5) BUDC Bulletin, March 1977.
- 6) The UFO Register, vol.7, pt.1, 1976.

Jenny Randles: 23 Sunningdale Drive, Irlam, Lancashire, M30 6NJ.

"SOME SKY MYSTERIES"

by
the late Edwin Spiller.

(Editorial Note: before his untimely death in 1975, Edwin Spiller had massed a very considerable collection of unusual aerial and celestial phenomena, and a section of his notes is given below. Some of the cases bear close comparison with others given by Fort and others, and evidently relate to the same general kinds of events. The notes on hailstones certainly make one think.)

SHOWER OF MUD:

On March 27th, 1803, a shower of mud fell out of the sky and was deposited near Udina (Udine), in Italy. The sky was clear at the time.
(Philosophical Magazine, vol.16, 1803, p.374).

REMARKABLE HAILSTONES:

On August 26th., 1834, huge hailstones of precise rectilinear shapes fell at Padua. Their shapes suggested they had broken off something larger and of regular configuration.
(Originally described by D.L.Cosari in Ann.Delle Scienze del Regno Lomb., Veneto, Nov.-Dec., 1834, the translated account can also be found in the New Edinburgh Philosophical Journal, vol.xix, 1835, pp.83-88).

GIANT HAILSTONES:

On Sunday, July 4th., 1915, enormous hailstones fell over a large area of northern Wiltshire, including the parishes of Crudwell, Charlton, Oaksey, Minety, Garsdon, and Eastcourt. Many of the hailstones were the size of common hens' eggs, and some of the largest were up to $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter. Not unnaturally they caused much damage, especially to glass-houses and crops.
(Wiltshire Archaeological & Natural History Magazine, vol.xxxix, 1915-1916, p.294).

RAIN FROM CLEAR SKY:

At 3.00 p.m., on September 5th., 1799, no less an observer than Alexander von Humboldt watched large drops of rain fall upon Cumana, Peru, from a cloudless blue sky.
(Edinburgh Journal of Science, vol.iv, Nov.-Apr., 1826, p.181).

COLOURED SNOWS:

On March 5th and 6th., 1803, a shower of red snow, or dust, fell at Pezzo, in Italy, at the extreme end of the Valle Camonica. It was preceded by a violent wind on the 5th. A similar shower fell in Carniola on the same days, and another shower of a rose coloured snow fell over the whole surface of Carnia, Beluno, Cadore, and Feltri, to a height of five feet ten inches. White snow had previously fallen, and the red shower was again succeeded by white snow. Analysis of samples showed that the red matter consisted of silex, alumina, and oxide of iron. These dates are very close to those elsewhere in Europe that year where unexplained falls of gelatinous matter occurred; and were only 21 days before the above noted shower of mud at Udine.

(Journ.de Physique, Apr.1804; Giornali di Fisica, November 9th., 1818; Edinburgh Philosophical Journal, vol.1, no:2, October 1819, p.235).

"AN IMPORTANT EVENT IN FRANCE:1947-1977 - FOR THE THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF UFO RESEARCHTHE STUDY OF U.F.O.'S MADE OFFICIAL"

by

Jean L. Brochard*

Since September 1st., 1977, a section for the study of UFOs has been set up in the National Centre for Space Studies at Toulouse (CNES). The Section, which has the name "Group for the Study of Unidentified Spatial Phenomena" (GEPAN) will be directed by Mr Claude Pöher.

Mr Pöher has for long been in charge of the "System and Project" division of CNES, and he will be assisted in his task by scientific advisors and outside specialists. Until the above date he had collected, unofficially, information on the UFO phenomenon at the Toulouse Space Centre.

As well as its task of studying the UFO phenomenon, GEPAN will be especially required to visit sites of any alleged UFO landings, and to make deductions and to conduct analyses of data gathered.

Until now, UFO reports throughout the whole world have been collected only by private groups and interested individuals, so this is the first time that an official public body, whose finances have been provided from State resources, has the study of UFOs written into its approved programme of activities.

The National Centre for Space Studies, being dependent upon the Ministry of Industry and Research, portrays the official decision to take up the study of UFOs in France seriously.

It is quite obvious that the above information, reported by the French National Press, constitutes a great step forward for French ufology, and for ufo research in general. For many months, numerous reports from various private research organizations have been sent to the Ministry for Research. Very likely, with the support of interested scientific circles, this activity has sparked off this governmental decision.

Nonetheless, this all represents but a victory in the first round; other rounds will follow; final victory will only be achieved if other European and foreign governments fall into line with similar decisions. Consequently, our "victory" in France would become a true internationalisation of the scientific study of the UFO phenomenon. The celebrated American ufologist, Dr J. Allen Hynek knows this only too well, and his statements at the recent meeting in Chicago constitute the proof of it.

Why, friends in Contact (UK), do you not make a concerted demand similar to that made by your French counter-parts, to competent British authorities?

Surely, as a general rule, there is no lack in both England and Great Britain as a whole of scientists competent to support your request?

I repeat, we shall only be able to advance our research in a significant manner by developing international co-operation as much at the official as at the private. Contact (UK) is already well known internationally at the private level. Now you must be known equally at the international level. Members of Contact (UK), readers of "Awareness", you have an important role to play. Courage and success to you all from your friends in France.

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"THE CAMOUFLAGE SYNDROME: Part 2"

by
J.B.Delair.

In the last (Autumn 1977) issue of this magazine, I published an article which drew together a large number of accounts about strange "clouds" and their even odder behaviour. Each case, of which several scores were cited, was fully documented so that interested readers could verify specific details. Readers evidently did this, as my postbag has been full of enquiries and questions from them requesting further information or answers to enigmas. Although my earlier paper contained a tentative explanation that at least some of these "clouds" were deliberate camouflage devices used by ufos, it is also true to state that neither I nor anyone else truly knows the real significance of these cloudy bodies, even though indications are strong that they really are intimately connected with ufos proper --- whatever they are. In order, therefore, that we may all ponder more deeply upon these aberrant "clouds", I give details of many further instances in chronological order below, from the earliest times up to and including 1899. Reports of similar incidents post-dating 1899 will form a future instalment of this study.

If, on the basis of the following reports and those detailed in my last article (1), a working theory acceptable to all can be formulated by some ingenious reader, then I should be delighted to hear from them. Such a theory, of course, will have to account for every case cited in these articles, and that, needless to say, is the big stumbling block.

Now to the collection of augmentary cases.

- 1) ca.A.D.842 (Sept.; exact date unknown). Between 7 and 8 p.m., a fiery red cloud, over or near Byzantium (Istanbul), remained stationary in the sky until "cockcrow" (dawn) the next day (2).
- 2) A.D.852 (June; exact date unknown). Several "purple" clouds appeared in the sky over Yamoto Province, Japan (3). In this connection it is perhaps significant that a silvery object shaped like a cigar or giant windsock, appeared in the sky over the Dakotas in November 1958, and left behind it a trail of strange "purple" clouds (4).
- 3) 1387: Oct.14th. At 6.00 a.m., a small cloud jettisoned a fluid described as "blood" over an unlocalized district in Derbyshire (5).
- 4) 1450 (exact date unknown). Two "very strange clouds" that manoeuvred were observed between Florence and Siena, in Italy (6).
- 5) 1574: Nov.14th. At midnight, fire and smoke was seen to issue from a stationary black cloud observed from Northamptonshire and many adjacent counties (7).
- 6) 1704: Nov.4th. A very fast, luminous cloud, moved over Switzerland on this date (8).
- 7) 1707: Dec.18th. At 8.0 p.m., a low stationary black cloud formed near the horizon, as seen from Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire, Worcestershire, Gloucestershire, Somerset, Devon, Hampshire, Sussex, Kent, London, and Essex, over which an arc of light formed and a cylindrical object accompanied by three "stars" took up position. The subsequent movements of the cylinder and black cloud were unquestionably related. (9).
- 8) 1716; 1st March. A ship at latitude $45^{\circ}36'$, off the Spanish coast, saw, at

9.0 p.m., a strange cloud in the sky that gave off rays of light (10).

- 9) 1716: March 31st. At an unspecified hour during the night residents in London watched a strange cloud in the sky emitting rays of light (11). Compare this event with that listed under number 8 on page 12 supra.
- 10) 1726: Oct. 19th. Between 7.30 and 11.0 p.m. several large fiery clouds and luminous rings were seen over Ath, Belgium, by many persons (12).
- 11) 1737: Dec. 5th. At 5.0pm. deep red clouds with fiery streamers of astonishing brilliance were seen by observers as far apart as Sheffield in Yorkshire, Kilkenny in Eire, and Venice in Italy (13).
- 12) 1751: Jan. 1st. A revolving cloud broke trees and killed a person NW. of Newry, County Down, Ireland (14). This may have been a whirlwind, but it is worth noting that the cloud was "very compact".
- 13) 1764: March (exact date unknown). A strange cloud was seen in the sky from various regions of the U.K. It was stationary for over $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours and projected rays of light perpendicularly upwards (15).
- 14) 1795: Nov. 18th. At 11.00 p.m. a bouncing fiery ball was seen over Derby, and is reported to have been associated with a "skyblast" and several clouds of very strange appearance (16).
- 15) 1801: July 4th. A fiery cloud, having a bluish edge was seen over Montgail-
lard, France, at 9.30 p.m., on this date (17).
- 16) 1808: May 13th. A red cloud appeared in the sky over Borgo San Donnino, some 40 miles E. of Piedmont, Italy, and remained stationary (18).
- 17) 1809: August 10th. A strange black cloud was seen by John Staveley from Hat-
ton Gardens, London, and many small lights were seen to
"dance" round and in and out of it (19).
- 18) 1811: Nov. 7th. At approximately 8.55 p.m., a large undulating "meteor", that moved in jerks, was watched by Thomas Forster to proceed to-
wards a cloud into which it finally passed and from which it
failed to emerge. Forster was observing from Clapton, London
(20).
- 19) 1812: May 1st. Two stationary clouds, one brown the other bluish in colour, remained stationary all day over Buttall's Plantation, in St. George's parish, Barbados. They were seen by hundreds of per-
sons and emitted numerous "skyblasts", while for over 12 hours
they discharged ash in such prodigious quantities that the
branches of several trees broke under the unaccustomed weight.
The local populace was understandably terror-stricken (21). It
may be relevant to note that this event occurred less than one
week after the extraordinary fall of stones over L'Aigle, in
Normandy, France, from a small rectangular cloud (22).
- 20) 1842: Exact date unspecified. A strange cloud hovered oddly for a consider-
able time and showered down upon the ground near Orenburg, U.S.S.R.,
many hexagonal metallic objects (23).
- 21) 1845: March 29th. An orange cloud or "mist" having four "stars" supporting it
was seen over London, England, on this date (24).

- 22) 1875: July 24th. At approximately 7.00 p.m., a revolving "cloud" came very low over Bicester, Oxfordshire, and sucked up water from a local stream. It was watched by a Mr Bates and another individual, who jointly reported the occurrence (25).
- 23) 1879: Feb.1st. A small black cloud appeared on a clear day in the eastern sector of the sky near Freemantle, Australia, and travelled at moderate speed towards the N.W. It then burst into a ball of fire with an apparent disc the size of a full Moon. Blood-red in colour, it left a train of black or dark-coloured vapour across the heavens, and which remained visible for $\frac{3}{4}$ hour after the cloud or object had disappeared. At the time, the sky was perfectly clear, the temperature was 100°F., and no sound was heard from the cloud or object (26).
- 24) 1886: Nov.3rd. A bright, perfectly round, cloud-like object was seen on this date in the sky over Hamar, Norway (27).
- 25) 1896: Feb.10th. A luminous cloud over Madrid, Spain, gave off a tremendous detonation, and shortly afterwards stones fell from it to the ground. The event was watched by many fearful witnesses (28). This event should be compared with several very similar earlier incidents described in the previous article I wrote on aberrant clouds (29).
- 26) 1897: April 16th. At 30 minutes past midnight on this date an airship-shaped cloud was observed over Big Bay, Michigan, U.S.A., and at other times on the same day similar dirrible-shaped clouds were seen the following localities in Michigan --- Saginaw, Charlotte, Pittsford, Clayton, and Ann Arbor (30). It is interesting that Ann Arbor in Michigan has repeatedly hosted ufo activity during subsequent years, including the now classic series of incidents in 1966 that generated the infamous "swamp gas" explanation.
- 27) Also noteworthy is the fact that many writers who have studied the famous "airship wave" of 1897, and within which the aforementioned observations occurred, have found difficulty in correlating those sightings with the more "conventional" ufo reports and behaviour patterns of later years. The fact that "modern" ufos and some of the 1897 "airships" use clouds or produce cloud-like bodies may be an important link between these two sets of seemingly distinct phenomena.
- 27) 1898: Jan.16th. Dr Espin, a respected astronomer, saw a cloud-like body moving in space against the stars of the constellation Perseus during the night hours of this date (31).
- 28) 1898, Jan.24th. The same astronomer watched a similar body moving in space against the stars of Perseus on this date, and again on February 17th following (32).

It is freely conceded that perhaps some of these incidents may have had meteorological rather than ufological origins, although in every case it is difficult to provide an fully acceptable modus operandi for them within the framework of our present knowledge. Further research may, of course, negate this statement.

Similar or generally comparable reports from post 1900 times will be listed in a subsequent article, until which time explanation, theoretical or working, is suspended.

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"ANOTHER PIECE OF THE UFO PUZZLE?"

by

Roland Watson *

The following item has been taken from the little known "Journal of George Fox" (1690), and may relate to the phenomena detailed in the preceding article.

"And I went into the Vale of Beavor, and as I went I preached repentance to the people. And one morning sitting by the fire, a great cloud came over me, and a temptation beset me. And it was said: ALL THINGS COME BY NATURE; and the Elements and the Stars came over me. And as I sat still and let it alone, a living hope arose in me, and a true Voice which said: THERE IS A LIVING GOD WHO MADE ALL THINGS. And immediately the cloud and the temptation vanished, and life rose over all, and my heart was glad and I praised the living God"

It would be interesting to know what this cloud really was.

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"BOOK REVIEWS AND BOOK NEWS"

by

Brinsley Le Poer Trench and J. Bernard Delair.

Books about UFOs and related subjects continue to pour out of publishing houses the world over, but while few are really worth reviewing, every now and again one encounters a publication well above the norm. Below are reviews of three such books.

UFOs: WHAT ON EARTH IS HAPPENING?

by John Weldon and Zola Levitt.

(Bantam Books, New York): 175 pp.

U.K. price 60p.

There is a great deal of extremely well researched information in this book. I was particularly interested by a contact-case that I had not heard of before, presumably because it had been kept under wraps, so to speak, by the authorities. It concerned a woman from Maine, U.S.A., and her experience was investigated by both Canadian and United States governmental officials. It is a good example of how alien intelligence can influence human minds, including that of a CIA agent. Of course, there will be those who will assert that no CIA agents are human, and therefore will not have human minds.

But, oh dear! The whole book was spoilt for me by the dogmatic religious views of the authors. I am sure they are both very sincere, devout Christians, and are entitled to their view that all ufonauts are demons. There is, indeed, something to be said for that view, though I prefer to think that there are both "goodies" and "badies". However, when in this day and age they go so far as to state that no intelligent life can exist in the universe to fit in with their religious views, that was too much for me. Such a stance does not withstand scrutiny.

The book, which is nonetheless worth reading to learn about the aforementioned case from Maine, has reference notes and some appendices, but, alas, no index.

B. Le P. T.

ACCORDING TO THE EVIDENCE: My proof of Man's Extraterrestrial Origins.

by Erich von Daniken: (translated by Michael Heron).

(Souvenir Press, London): 348pp.

U.K. price £4.50p.

This reviewer frankly confesses to not having been in the past a keen supporter, or even a mild supporter, of Erich von Daniken's writings, such as "Chariots of the Gods", "Return to the Stars", "In Search of Ancient Gods", "Gold of the Gods", etc., but has now adopted a different attitude towards his latest volume, entitled "According to the Evidence". This is not to say that a wholehearted acceptance of von Daniken's theories has occurred, but a very real recognition of von Daniken's more controlled and better reasoned approach, as epitomized by "According to the Evidence", has occurred.

As usual von Daniken covers a very wide range of topics, although in this instance welds them together as likely pieces of a puzzling whole much more convincingly (so far as this reviewer is concerned) than in previous books. The result makes for exciting reading; and that, coupled with numerous photographs and drawings, makes for an exciting book. Of course there are factual errors here and there, and too many typographical errors for comfort (somebody hasn't read the book-proofs very well), while some of the photographs have not been printed very clearly (at least not in my copy of the book). Nonetheless, the overall result is most stimulating, and should give anyone many happy hours of

reading. Somewhat surprisingly, von Daniken is occasionally as trenchant in his writing as the late Charles Fort, which is praise indeed. If one does not always agree with his interpretations of the evidence he advances, one nearly always agrees with him respecting various past occasions when officialdom has been conspicuous by its narrow-mindedness and bumbledom.

Topics such as the extraordinary astronomical knowledge of the African Dagon tribe, the flight achievements of Daedalus, space stations, and ancient Indian and Sumerian astronautic lore are discussed in lively style; but among the most intriguing of all, perhaps, are the contents of the little known "Chronicle of Akakor" and the fantastic carved and painted stones collected by Dr Cabrera of Ica, Peru. Both the stones and the "Chronicle" describe or depict antediluvian life and aviation involving deities and men. Today, we recognize some of that antediluvian life as fossils, so it is easy to imagine how startled one is to find the footprints of dinosaurs contemporaneous with those of giant men petrified in Stone in the Glen Rose and Walnut Creek areas of Texas, and that these have been discussed in detail by Dr C.N.Dougherty ("The Valley of the Giants", 1971). It is for assembling the unlikely and the outrageous into a coherent whole that we must be grateful to von Daniken, in this his best tome to date.

No less than 348 pages in length, "According to the Evidence" contains adequate documentation throughout, but sadly no index. Any second edition of this book really must be provided with an index. Yet, despite this omission, you will enjoy this book, even though some of the information offered may not square with your own notions or may be new to you. Certainly it is well worth the asking price.

J.B.D.

NO EARTHLY EXPLANATION,

by John Wallace Spencer.

(Bantam Books, New York): 178 pp.

U.K.price 60p.

This is a fascinating book by the author of the best-selling "Limbo of the Lost". In this current work, Mr Spencer sets out to prove that all of us here are a combination of both earthly and alien beings; furthermore, that this planet and its denizens (humans included) are part of a gigantic galactic experiment.

The author asks the very interesting question: where did we aliens originate? He does not adopt the view expressed by Weldon and Levitt in their book reviewed on the opposite page -- that ufonauts are all demons -- although he puts up a strong case for some strange and frightening (to us) happenings due to ufos in the so-called Bermuda Triangle area. Mr Spencer certainly goes along with the concept, now widely accepted by astronomers and laymen alike, that the Universe is replete with intelligent life.

"No Earthly Explanation" contains 16 pages of interesting illustrations, but, regrettably offers no bibliography or references, and, worse still, no index. It is, however, well worth its selling price of 60p., and should be read by everyone purporting to be a ufologist or having an interest in the ufo enigma.

B.Le P.T.

Among the more recent books now available (but not reviewed here) are:-

"Celestial Passengers: UFOs and Space Travel", by Sachs and Jahn (Penguin).

"Cosmic Trigger", by Robert Anton Wilson (And-Or Press).

"UFOs and Anti-Gravity", by Cathie and Temm (Stackpole).

"Paradox: The Case for the Extraterrestrial Origin of Man", by J.P.Cohane (Crown).

"Interstellar Travel: Past, Present, and Future", by John W.Macvey (Stein & Day).

Happy reading.

"ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & LECTURES FOR 1977"

by

F.W.Passey *

The Annual General Meeting and Lectures for 1977 took place at Caxton Hall, in London, on Saturday. October 22nd., and were reasonably well attended. Certainly a few more members at the A.G.M. would have been welcome, but doubtless many people were prevented from staying to the end, when the A.G.M. was held, by the necessity to leave early to catch transport home. The reason why the order of the items comprising this year's programme was different from those of previous years was due mainly to the fact that the first speaker, who travelled all the way from Newcastle-upon-Tyne, had to make a reasonably early start homewards in order to get home at all, thus the A.G.M. this year followed the lectures rather than preceded them as in former years.

The proceedings commenced at 3.0 p.m. with a lecture by author and ufo researcher Raymond Drake, his talk being entitled "UFOs in Ancient Times". This was a fascinating talk, and Mr Drake's memory for dates and events proved to be phenomenal. Quoting from South American, Egyptian, Babylonian and Roman records (to name but a few), Mr Drake presented an unassailable case for extra-terrestrials having visited our planet in bygone ages. At the conclusion of his talk, several interesting questions were posed by various members in the audience, each of which was dealt with fully and skilfully.

After a short interval, the second lecture -- "Ghosts and Haunted Places" -- was presented by Peter Underwood, President of the Ghost Club of Great Britain (founded in 1862) and author of fourteen books on the subject. Although there is presently no truly demonstrable evidence that ufos and psychic phenomena are related, it was felt by your Committee that this would nevertheless be a suitable subject for members; and this, admirably illustrated by the number of questions put forward at the close of Mr Underwood's talk, proves to have been a wise choice. Those present must have been struck by the similarity between ufos and ghostly phenomena --- each having well attested reports from competent witnesses but both dogged by the lack of understanding or proof of what the reported events actually signify. As with the earlier lecture, all questions were dealt with most expertly.

Following another short break, the Annual General Meeting was held, although by this time the number of persons present had dwindled somewhat. The Secretary's and Treasurer's reports were read and well received, and the current Committee re-elected 'en bloc'. During the 'Any Other Business' phase, the question of membership participation in research and eyewitness interviewing was again raised (it seems to be nearly every year). Several members said they would like to see more individual involvement (as, indeed, would the Committee), but it was agreed that this was particularly difficult to effect due to the far-flung distribution of our present membership. One member suggested that members should be encouraged to investigate occurrences local to them. The Senior Research Officer pointed out that no such course could be recommended since such local activity would cut across the lines of Contact (UK)'s own investigatory network, might cause resentment among and inconvenience to witnesses due to the resultant continual visits and questions, and that much valuable work already achieved in this direction could be jeopardized. He suggested that more fruitful ways of membership assistance lay in liaising as far as practicable with local police, military (e.g. RAF), and meteorological authorities, and combing local libraries and press offices for ufo reports for speedy onwards transmission to Data Research headquarters.

At the conclusion many members remained behind for informal discussions, the gen-

eral opinion being that both lectures and Annual General Meeting were a success. The Committee fervently hopes that those members who attended this year's programme were well repaid for their efforts, and looks forward to meeting them again next year.

* 59D Windmill Road, Headdington, Oxford.

"SOME SELECTED BRITISH U.F.O. REPORTS"

by

D.N.Mansell & P.Flatman*

Reports of various calibre and degrees of detail continue to pour into Contact (UK)'s headquarters at Wheatley, and the following selection, among those investigated by our splendid new team of field agents, are typical.

They are presented chronologically, and relate to the months of June, July, August, and September. They represent but a tiny fraction of all the reports received, yet contain elements of the highest interest.

June 9th., 1977: Evening (exact time unnoted). Investigated by E.Price.
Long Melford, (Suffolk).

A man and a woman travelling in a Jaguar car suddenly experienced engine trouble while driving home. The woman, having seen a bright light traverse the lower part of the sky shortly before, suggested that the object (not yet identified) may have caused the malfunction. After a short while, the car's engine started normally again.

June 1st., 1977: 10.30 p.m. Investigated by Data Research.
Kennington, nr.Oxford (Oxfordshire).

A young man and his girl-friend standing in a house doorway saw a bright silver object surrounded by a glowing red haze pass silently over the house concerned. It did not appear to be at any great height and was not recognizable as a conventional aeroplane or other man-made aerial device.

June 6th., 1977: 11.10 p.m.
Egglesstone, (Durham).

A young motor-cyclist was travelling slowly along a country road in heavy rain when he observed two bright objects, estimated at 15-20 miles distant. They disappeared for 20-30 seconds, shortly after which a car overtook the motor-cyclist. As it did so, a light enveloped both the car and witness, causing both to lose power. Indeed, the motor-cyclist could get no response from the controls and felt heat on his back and legs, and noticed steam coming off his jacket. Taking off a glove, he felt his arm and the petrol-tank section of the motor-cycle to be very hot. After proceeding at enforced slowness for about 200 yards, the light was extinguished, and motor-cycle instantly regained normal power.

June 30th., 1977: 9.55 p.m. Investigated by Brian Fanter.
Market Harborough (Leicestershire).

A married couple were driving past Gartree Prison when they saw a cigar-shaped silvery-coloured object, with three bright lights underneath it, in the sky nearby. It suddenly disappeared into thin air before the eyewitnesses' astonished gaze.

* Members of Data Research team.

July 3rd., 1977: 2.15 p.m.

Investigated by Ted Horton.

Hamstead village, Great Barr, (West Midlands).

Two witnesses, a mother and her son, saw a silver and grey colour object shaped like a tapered half-Moon, the size of a pea held at arm's length. It was sharply outlined, was hovering, and appeared to be rotating. After some minutes it began to move off fairly quickly, and finally disappeared from view after about six minutes.

July 4th., 1977: 3.00 a.m.

Investigated by Roy Fisher.

Canvey Island (Essex).

Several witnesses saw a large yellow light, the size of a sixpence at arm's length. On viewing the object through a telescope, some of the observers noted that the light changed shape to a square, then a diamond, and then two interwoven rings. Throughout this period of the observation the object had remained stationary, the light itself flickering or pulsating, but shortly afterwards it began to ascend slowly and finally disappeared from view high in the sky.

July 16th., 1977: 3.10 a.m.

Warrington (Cheshire).

Two persons watched a saucer-shaped object from their bedroom window. Described as being a "glorious orange colour", the object was heard to emit a humming sound and was seen to be rotating as it travelled swiftly across the sky.

July 31st., 1977: 9.55 p.m.

Investigated by Brian Panter.

Market Harborough (Leicestershire).

A married couple were driving in their car when they saw a large mushroom-shaped object in the sky nearby. The object was a silvery-grey and shrouded in a mist. It exhibited three lights, but before further observation was possible, the object just faded away or dematerialized.

August 1st., 1977: 4.00 a.m.

Investigated by Roy Fisher.

Plumstead (London).

A lone witness saw, from his bedroom window, a large star-shaped object, white in colour, and the size of a penny held at arm's length. The object, which continually pulsated, changed shape, and appeared to be moving close to the horizon. The object then stopped; when this occurred the object appeared to get larger and very much brighter --- so much so that it dazzled the witness's eyes. After this, the object shrank in size again and completely disappeared.

August 5th., 1977: 10.25 p.m.

Investigated by Bill Smurthwaite.

Washington (Tyne & Wear).

Witness noticed a red glow coming under her outside door. Investigating, she went outside and beheld a glowing red object hovering in the sky. It was round, and the size of a pea held at arm's length. Shortly afterwards it disappeared extremely quickly.

Another witness at Sunderland, in neighbouring Co. Durham, saw a similar object at 10.10 p.m. This witness reported this object as being round, and having red, orange, whitish-grey, and gold colours around a dark centre, the overall diameter of whatever it was being approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ inch at arm's length. The object just hovered in the sky, and was totally soundless. The witness did not stay long enough to observe the object's mode of departure.

August 11th., 1977: 11.15 p.m.

Investigated by Ted Horton.

Warley (West Midlands).

A married couple saw a flying-wing shaped object in the sky. It appeared to be at a very high altitude and of immense size. It glowed a dim red colour, and travelled fairly fast on a straight course; it was soundless, although this latter feature may have been due to the great altitude of the object.

August 25th., 1977: 11.00 - 11.15 p.m.

Investigated by Anne West.

Houghton (Tyne & Wear).

Some people were waiting at a bus-stop for a bus when they saw a star-shaped object dropping like a common shooting-star, except that it took longer to descend than a normal shooting-star and seemed to glide down in a graceful arc. The object, as large as a cricket-ball at arm's length (very big for a shooting-star), was bright orange in colour and soundless.

This object is not regarded as a meteor (shooting-star), and its characteristics are apparently not those of a fireball or bolide.

August 26th., 1977: approximately 9.00 p.m.

Investigated by Roy Fisher.

High Barnet (Hertfordshire).

A mother and her daughter watched an unusual round, grey colour, object in the sky. It carried five white lights and a larger central red light. The object was sharply outlined, and was the size of a football at arm's length. When first seen, the object was proceeding slowly, but then stopped and hovered, changing brightness as it did so and turning off its lights, except for two dim white lights. It hovered for an estimated two minutes, then started moving slowly again, with all the original lights back on. The object then suddenly went into a steep dive, and appeared to land behind some houses. A subsequent search of the probable landing area revealed nothing.

September 4th., 1977: 7.30 p.m.

Investigated by Roy Fisher.

Kenley, (Surrey).

Two friends out walking watched a saucer-shaped object, the size of a sixpence at arm's length, in the sky. It was a silvery colour, and carried several orange-yellow lights. When first seen the object was hovering and seemed to be changing brightness. Its mode of departure was not observed.

September 7th., 1977: 10.25 p.m.

Investigated by Kathleen Waldron.

Warrington (Cheshire).

A young man on his way up to bed, noticed a round object, silver in colour, and the size of a cricket-ball at arm's length, through a window in his house. Almost immediately the object ascended vertically a short distance and remained in that position for approximately $1\frac{1}{2}$ minutes. It then moved off slowly and disappeared behind nearby houses.

September 11th., 1977: 12.32 p.m.

Communicated by Michael Lenz.

Northwich (Cheshire).

A man was looking out of an upstairs window in his house when he noticed a round white object sharply outlined in the sky. It was travelling very quickly, and was only in view for an estimated 30 seconds.

Checks have revealed there were no meteorological balloons up (such as might have conceivably accounted for this sighting) in that region on that date.

September 19th., 1977: 1.30 a.m.

Investigated by John Judge.

Margate (Kent).

The witness, who is an amateur astronomer, was observing the sky when he heard a noise like a squealing tyre, although more high pitched. He then noticed a cloud behaving in a peculiar manner, which, when viewed through binoculars, was seen to consist of 8 to 10 dull white or grey coloured objects. They were moving quickly from North to South, and were only in view four to five seconds.

No known astronomical phenomenon could account for this sighting, while the witness's reference to a peculiar cloud immediately reminds one of the strange clouds associated with ufos on other occasions discussed in this and the preceding issue of "Awareness".

Further ufo reports from the British Isles will be presented for the last quarter of 1977 in the forthcoming Spring 1978 issue of this journal. Meanwhile, we close this review with a reference to the astonishing claim made by a farmer at Tout, in France, that, shortly before September 25th., 1977, a ufo landed in his field in broad daylight, and that a naked man and woman leapt from the object, went through the act of making love three times, and then got back into the object which promptly zoomed off into the sky. The farmer claimed that he tried to get closer to the object, but was hurled backwards by its "blast". Not surprisingly, local gendarmes were grinning broadly when they filed his report (News of the World, 25.9.1977). Although superficially incredible, it should not be forgotten that many supposed contact claims or abduction claims over the past five years have involved clinical examinations of both male and female human beings by ufo entities, and that the now famous Antonio Villas Boas incident allegedly involved an alien female and a Brazilian farmer. It is noteworthy that all these earlier cases, including the Villas Boas episode just mentioned, took place inside the confines of ufo-like craft (if indeed they are craft), and that this latest reproductive effort occurred outside a ufo-like craft. On the assumption that the earlier clinical examinations and the Villas Boas copulatory episode were all part of some controlled programme of bio-medical type, might not the alleged event at Tout have been a follow-up experiment to discover whether aliens could satisfactorily reproduce in an Earth environment? One hesitates to push such an explanation too far, but perhaps the amazing French claim is not so amazing after all.

"ODDS and ENDS"

by

J.B.Delair.

The foregoing article will have shown that September appears to have been an interesting month from a ufological point of view, thus it will come as no surprise to learn that other events, which have been provisionally lumped together under the phrase "Peripheral Ufology" in previous issues of "awareness", also occurred in September, and may have a bearing on the ufo problem proper.

For example, frogs fell from the sky at Perpignan, or rather at nearby Canet Plage, in the Pyrenees Orientales, France, early in September. Villagers at this place stared disbelievingly when hundreds of frogs fell just after a violent storm had passed over the neighbourhood. A council employee said:

"Those which fell on grass-land survived. Those which fell on roads were either killed by passing cars or by the impact".

This event was reported in the Sunday Express for 4.9.1977, when it saw fit to offer the explanation of how the frogs became airborne in the first place, for, it was claimed, the violent storm just mentioned had whipped up the unfortunate animals from nearby marshlands where they live. A neat answer but one which will scarcely satisfy those who stop to reflect upon the modus operandi of such a thing. If the frogs had become airborne in this fashion, why were only frogs taken up by the wind? Every marsh contains water snails, small water birds, lost birds' feathers, bits of detached water weed and broken reeds, and many other items no heavier (and sometimes less heavy) than the average frog. Why were not these also carried up by the aforesaid wind and deposited at Canet Plage along with the frogs? It is the unnatural selectivity of the phenomenon that truly impresses. Yet this same selectivity can be repeatedly traced down through history when comparable sky falls have occurred. And they have sometimes occurred in association with ufos.

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All communications should be either addressed direct to Dr.Haines or to the editor who will forward them to him. Dr.Haines's address is: 325 Langton Avenue, Los Altos, California 94022, USA.

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